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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Agenda item 3
Theme of the session: "Indigenous children and youth"

Draft recommendations submitted by the Rapporteur

Indigenous children and youth

1. As stated in its report on its first session,[1] the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues decided to make indigenous children and youth a focal point of its work in the years to come. The Forum reconfirms its commitment to do so, and acknowledges the efforts made by indigenous organizations, United Nations agencies and States in the past year to tackle the urgent needs of the young generation, including the decision of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to declare indigenous children as the subject for its theme day, to be held in September 2003.

2. The Forum reiterates the requests and recommendations made in its report on its first session, and in addition:

(a) Encourages United Nations bodies whose activities have an impact on indigenous children and youth, including but not limited to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, to report regularly to the Forum. The reports should contain detailed information on and assess the progress made within programmes directed at, affecting and relating to indigenous adolescents.

(b) Reiterates its request that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as the United Nations nodal agency on children:

- Present a comprehensive report to the Forum on an annual basis, including budgetary allocations and an assessment of their impact, including details of all its initiatives undertaken in collaboration with other specialized bodies of

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the United Nations system relating to indigenous children and those undertaken at the international or regional levels as well as country initiatives, where applicable.

- Provide information from the multi-indicator cluster survey being globally undertaken by UNICEF, disaggregating data on the antenatal health, birth, registration, immunization and early childhood development of indigenous children.

3. The Forum welcomes the participation of the Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the high-level panel and dialogue on indigenous children and youth held during its second session, takes note with satisfaction of the fact that the Committee will devote a day of general discussion to indigenous children on 19 September 2003, with the participation of UNICEF, and expresses hope that that will lead to enhanced monitoring and promotion of the rights of indigenous children at the national and international levels. The Forum recommends that the Chairman of the Committee inform the next meeting of the Chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies of the results of the high-level panel and dialogue. The Forum requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to transmit the results of the discussion of the Committee to the Forum at its third session.

4. The Forum recommends that the Inter-Agency Support Group discuss how to promote the cross-cutting issue of children and youth.

5. The Forum notes that in order for it and the United Nations system to review the situation of indigenous children and youth, there is a need for country-specific situation analyses. Given UNICEF's unique and long experience and expertise in that area, the Forum invites UNICEF to initiate such situation analyses on indigenous children by field offices in countries with indigenous communities. The Forum also invites UNICEF to transmit such situation analyses to the Forum.

6. The Forum is deeply concerned that particular problems and discrimination are faced by indigenous children and youth, including in the areas of education, health, culture, extreme poverty, mortality, incarceration, labour and other relevant areas. The Forum notes the need for new indicators to be developed by the United Nations that will specifically target those problems, and in that regard invites UNICEF to develop such new indicators and share them with other entities of the United Nations system, especially UNESCO.

7. The Forum welcomes the new initiatives undertaken by UNICEF with regard to indigenous children, in particular the ongoing development of a digest on the indigenous child, as well as a number of case studies aimed at understanding development programming to fulfil the rights of indigenous children. The Forum requests UNICEF to make the digest and the results of those studies available to the Forum at its third session.

8. The Forum requests UNICEF, in cooperation with the ILO, UNESCO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to assess the training needs that exist regarding issues faced by indigenous children and youth at the national and regional levels, and to report to the Forum at its fourth session on ways that the United Nations system can assist in capacity-building in that area.

9. The Forum welcomes the inclusion in the 2003 Ibero-American Summit of a focus on indigenous children, and requests UNICEF to report to the Forum on the

results of the Summit in that area, and to indicate how lessons can be learned and policy approaches improved concerning indigenous children in other parts of the world with indigenous peoples, specifically Asia and Africa.

10. The Forum urges UNICEF to develop its policy on and guidelines regarding indigenous peoples in time for the third session of the Forum.

11. The Forum recommends that UNICEF consider the appointment of a goodwill ambassador of indigenous children and youth to raise public awareness, and calls upon States and civil society to initiate and speed up programmes targeting the urgent needs of indigenous adolescents within their domains.

12. Aware of the massive exodus of indigenous youth to the alien environments of cities around the world and the discrimination, socio-economic hardships, weakened family networks and drug abuse, among others, affecting those youngsters and "street children", the Forum requests the World Bank and UNICEF to conduct an in-depth comparative study of legal frameworks and social programmes addressing indigenous urban youth in selected countries. The study should assess key problems and best practices, and should provide recommendations for the formulation of policies and strategies for future action.

13. The Forum recommends that the United Nations system, in particular the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, UNICEF and WHO, in collaboration with Governments and in consultation with indigenous peoples' organizations, prepare a policy and a plan of action to address the issues related to the trafficking and sexual exploitation of indigenous girls, as well as to their corresponding rehabilitation in a dignified manner, and report to the Forum at its third session on action taken by the United Nations system. It also recommends that UNESCO conduct research on the causes of trafficking, and that Governments put in place mechanisms of control against child trafficking, especially judicial measures, and that they take coercive measures against multilateral corporations and houses of sexual exploitation (*maisons de tolerance*) that exploit those trafficked children.

14. The Forum invites the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, within the purview of his mandate, to pay special attention to and make recommendations concerning the human rights of indigenous children.

15. In order to promote further knowledge of the Forum and the role of the United Nations among indigenous children and youth, the Forum decides to organize an indigenous youth art competition for the design of a logo for the Forum and to present the results to the Forum at its fourth session, in 2005, with the highest participation of indigenous children, including illiterate children.

16. The Forum recommends that Governments and the United Nations system prepare specific policies on indigenous children and youth and that they implement programmes, in close coordination with indigenous peoples' organizations, to promote the enjoyment of the human rights of indigenous children and youth; strengthen, recover and conserve their indigenous languages; reaffirm their traditional knowledge; promote their culture and education; respect their practice of indigenous spirituality; and contribute to their self-esteem. For that purpose, the Forum recommends the creation of special centres for indigenous children and youth, in close coordination with indigenous peoples' organizations.

17. The Forum, taking into account the large number of incarcerated indigenous children and youth and the need to assist them in reintegrating in society as soon as possible through socio-educational measures, recommends that the Economic and Social Council urge Governments to ensure greater protection and humane treatment of those children and youth while in prison and youth detention centres, and to provide them with socio-educational measures for their rehabilitation.

18. The Forum, taking into account that indigenous children, youth and women are more vulnerable and are often physically and psychologically mistreated, and that children represent the future of indigenous peoples, recommends that the Council support the declaration of an international day or an international year of the indigenous child, to be celebrated with awareness-raising activities to honour the cultural identity of indigenous peoples.

19. The Forum recommends that UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, the ILO, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA and other United Nations bodies, in collaboration with Governments and in close coordination with indigenous peoples, prepare a Latin American conference of indigenous children and youth in 2004, taking into account the experience of the Subregional Conference of Indigenous Youth and Children, held in Quito in 2001.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 23* (E/2002/43/Rev.1), chap. I, sect. B, para. 31.